

THE NAVAJO NATION
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH
INTERNET PUBLIC REVIEW PUBLICATION



LEGISLATION NO: _0099-20_____

SPONSOR: **Daniel Tso**

TITLE: An Action Relating to Health, Education and Human Services: Approving temporary amendments to the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance Policies and Procedures to accommodate students impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic

Date posted: April 23, 2020 at 5:43pm

Digital comments may be e-mailed to comments@navajo-nsn.gov

Written comments may be mailed to:

**Executive Director
Office of Legislative Services
P.O. Box 3390
Window Rock, AZ 86515
(928) 871-7590**

Comments may be made in the form of chapter resolutions, letters, position papers, etc. Please include your name, position title, address for written comments; a valid e-mail address is required. Anonymous comments will not be included in the Legislation packet.

Please note: This digital copy is being provided for the benefit of the Navajo Nation chapters and public use. Any political use is prohibited. All written comments received become the property of the Navajo Nation and will be forwarded to the assigned Navajo Nation Council standing committee(s) and/or the Navajo Nation Council for review. Any tampering with public records are punishable by Navajo Nation law pursuant to 17 N.N.C. §374 *et. seq.*

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY SHEET

Tracking No. 0099-20

DATE: April 23, 2020

TITLE OF RESOLUTION: AN ACTION RELATING TO HEALTH, EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES: APPROVING TEMPORARY AMENDMENTS TO THE OFFICE OF NAVAJO NATION SCHOLARSHIP AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO ACCOMMODATE STUDENTS IMPACTED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

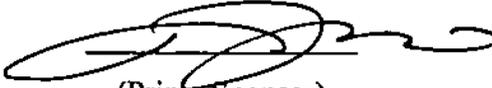
PURPOSE: The purpose of this legislation is to temporarily amend the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance Policies and Procedures to accommodate students impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This written summary does not address recommended amendments as may be provided by the standing committees. The Office of Legislative Counsel requests each Council Delegate to review each proposed resolution in detail.

5-DAY BILL HOLD PERIOD:
Website Posting Time/Date:
Posting End Date: 04-28-20
Eligible for Action: 04-29-20

1 PROPOSED STANDING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION
2 24th NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL -- Second Year, 2020

3 INTRODUCED BY

4
5 
6 (Printer Sponsor)

7
8 TRACKING NO. 0099-20

9
10 AN ACTION
11 RELATING TO HEALTH, EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES: APPROVING
12 TEMPORARY AMENDMENTS TO THE OFFICE OF NAVAJO NATION
13 SCHOLARSHIP AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICIES AND
14 PROCEDURES TO ACCOMMODATE STUDENTS IMPACTED BY THE
15 COVID-19 PANDEMIC

16
17
18 BE IT ENACTED:

19
20 SECTION ONE. AUTHORITY

- 21 A. The Health Education and Human Services Committee is a standing committee of the
22 Navajo Nation Council and as such, has been delegated authority to promulgate
23 regulations, promote accountability to policies, and provide legislative oversight on
24 matters involving health, social service, education, general governmental services and
25 human services. 2 N.N.C. § 400 (A) and (C)(1).
26 B. The Health Education and Human Services Committee is specifically empowered to
27 establish Navajo Nation policy [and] promulgate rules and regulations governing
28 education. 2 N.N.C. § 401 (B)(1).
29 C. Pursuant to Article 27 §89 of the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial
30 Assistance Programs Policies and Procedures, attached as **Exhibit A**, enacted by ECMY-

1 28-02, the Health Education and Human Services Committee may amend such Policies
2 and Procedures from time to time.

3 **SECTION TWO. FINDINGS**

- 4 A. COVID-19 is a dangerous and extremely contagious respiratory virus. The COVID-
5 19 virus is pandemic and is spreading at an alarming rate within the Navajo Nation; as
6 of April 22, 2020, the Navajo Nation has reported 1282 confirmed cases of COVID-19
7 and 49 related deaths.
- 8 B. The World Health Organization declared a Public Health Emergency of International
9 Concern on January 30, 2020; the United States Department of Health and Human
10 Services declared a Public Health Emergency related to the COVID-19 outbreak on
11 January 31, 2020; and the World Health Organization officially declared a pandemic
12 due to COVID-19 on March 11, 2020.
- 13 C. On March 11, 2020, the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management, with
14 the concurrence of the President and Vice President of the Navajo Nation, declared a
15 Public Health State of Emergency due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in areas
16 surrounding the Navajo Nation. Acknowledging the establishment of the Health
17 Command Center by the Navajo Nation Department of Health, the Commission stated,
18 "Locally, it is acknowledged and understood that the threat of COVID-19 needs to be
19 mitigated to reduce risk of exposure to the Navajo People and the resultant
20 consequential public health impacts." CEM-20-03-11, attached as **Exhibit B**.
- 21 D. The Navajo Nation's declaration of a Public Health State of Emergency due to the
22 outbreak of COVID-19 is still in effect and has not been downgraded.
- 23 E. Many students receiving scholarships and financial aid through the Office of Navajo
24 Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance will be unable to finish the 2020s Spring
25 Semester because of COVID-19 related issues, including, but not limited to college and
26 university shut downs and the students' inabilities to access the technology necessary
27 for on-line courses.
- 28 F. In addition, many colleges and universities are not issuing letter grades which is at odds
29 with the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance Programs
30 Policies and Procedures.

1 G. For the foregoing reasons, the Health, Education and Human Services Committee of
2 the Navajo Nation Council finds temporary changes to the Office of Navajo Nation
3 Scholarship and Financial Assistance Programs Policies and Procedures to
4 accommodate students affected by circumstances not under their control related to the
5 COVID-19 pandemics to be in the best interests of Navajo Nation students.
6

7 **SECTION FOUR. APPROVING TEMPORARY CHANGES TO THE OFFICE OF**
8 **NAVAJO NATION SCHOLARSHIP AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**
9 **PROGRAMS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

10 The Health, Education and Human Services Committee of the Navajo Nation Council
11 hereby temporarily approves the amendments to the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship
12 and Financial Assistance Programs Policies and Procedures as set forth in **Exhibit A**.
13

14 **SECTION FIVE. EFFECTIVE DATE; DURATION**

- 15 A. This Action shall become effective upon certification by the Chairperson of the Health,
16 Education and Human Services Committee of the Navajo Nation Council.
- 17 B. This Action shall expire at the earlier of the rescission of the Public Health State of
18 Emergency declaration on the Navajo Nation or the Health, Education and Human
19 Services Committee's approval of permanent amendments to the Office of Navajo
20 Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance Programs Policies and Procedures.
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30